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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVKHOZES IN THE UKRAINE

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A quarter century has passed since the July Plenum of the TsK VKP(b) in 1928 decided to organize grain sovkhozes, which were to be large new state agricultural enterprises. Not only has the successful activity of grain sovkhozes promoted solution of the grain problem in the USSR, but the experience gained from their operation has been used to organize sovkhozes devoted to other types of production. For example, the 16th Congress of the VKP(b) adopted a decision to organize livestock sovkhozes.

The organization of sovkhozes to a considerable degree promoted concentration of large commercial grain supplies in the hands of the state and expansion of the procurement of animal products by the state. During the five-year plans, sovkhozes became highly organized socialist enterprises.

All sovkhozes created in the Ukraine were surveyed by land organizers, and the grass-field system of crop rotation was introduced in them. Clubhouses, schools, libraries, hospitals, repair shops, and electric power stations were built. Most sovkhozes have been electrified and equipped with radio communication facilities. Thus, sovkhozes have become real cultural centers in the rural sections of the country.

A high level of mechanization and general application of advanced agricultural practices have assured large and stable harvests in sovkhozes year after year. Before World War II, Ukrainian sovkhozes alone were delivering to the state tens of millions of pud of grain annually and had, per 100 hectares of land, 11.1 head of cattle, 14.1 head of hogs, and 14 head of sheep.

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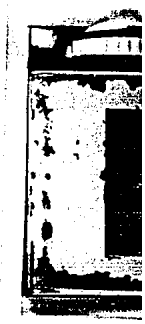

During World War II, most Ukrainian sovkhozes were ruined by enemy occupation; war losses ran to billions of rubles. After the war, reconstruction work was begun. By the beginning of the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the amount of mechanical equipment was greater than before the war: in percentage of 1940, tractors (horsepower) were 110, combines (width of swath, in feet) 124, trucks (units) 166, and grain-cleaning machines (units) 200, per 100 hectares of plowland.

When World War II broke out, caterpillar tractors made up 29 percent of the sovkhoz tractor park; they now constitute 77 percent of the tractor park. Whereas there were no diesel tractors (or self-propelled combines or self-propelled hay mowers) in sovkhozes before the war, now 2.1 horsepower of diesel tractor power is available per 100 hectares of plowland.

In 1948, Ukrainian sovkhozes fully reattained their prewar sown area. The area sown to wheat in 1950 was 2.2 times as great as in 1945; that sown to fodder crops, seven times as great. The area sown to wheat in 1950 exceeded the prewar area by 15 percent; that sown to fodder crops, by 57 percent. The area devoted to winter wheat was substantially greater in 1950 than before the war.

In 1951, the gross grain harvest in sovkhozes of the Ukrainian SSR exceeded the prewar level, and the yield of grain crops was 13 percent higher than in the best prewar years. These circumstances permitted the sovkhozes to fulfill the state plan for grain delivery ahead of schedule and to deliver to the state hundreds of thousands of pud of grain, mainly wheat, in excess of plan.

In 1952, further successes were achieved. The yield of grain crops rose sharply, exceeding the 1951 average yield by 40 percent. In the Peremozhets Sovkhoz, the largest in the Ukraine, an average grain yield of 21 quintals per hectare was obtained from an area of 14,000 hectares, and yields of 40-42 quintals per hectare from individual smaller areas.

In the Krasnaya Bashtanka Sovkhoz, located in Nikolayevskaya Oblast in the arid steppe zone, an average grain yield of 27.5 quintals per hectare was obtained from an area of 5,000 hectares. High grain yields were obtained in the overwhelming majority of sovkhozes. It should be noted that successes achieved in raising yields are the result of systematic agronomic work carried out in sovkhozes. In the Krasnaya Bashtanka Sovkoz, the grain yield increased 220 percent during the last 2 years; yield increases during the last years in the Izvestiya Sovkhoz in Zaporozhskaya Oblast are shown in the following table:

Crop	Average Yield per Hectare (quintals)	
	1951	1952
All grain crops	20.1	28.8
Winter wheat	22.6	31.1
Including winter wheat sown on summer fallow	26.0	33.8
Barley	19.7	26.5
Oats	16.8	32.0

Successes of Ukrainian sovkhozes are due mainly to the introduction of the grass-field system of crop rotation. By 1951, all sovkhozes in Poltavskaya, Sumskaya, Kiyevskaya, and Chernigovskaya oblasts had fully converted to the sowing of perennial grasses, and the areas sown equaled those planned for that year. The postwar grass-field crop rotation system had the advantage over the prewar system that in the main, economically valuable and high yielding crops

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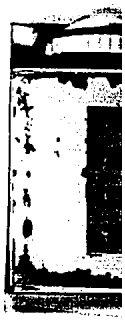

were sown; this also created better conditions for restoring the fertility of the soil. As a result of introducing crop rotation, the Veselyy Khutor Sovkhoz in Poltavskaya Oblast during the last 4 years obtained an average annual yield of 150-200 pud of grain per hectare from the entire area sown to grain crops. Large, stable harvests are also being obtained by the Sovkhozes imeni Vtoraya Pyatiletka and imeni 25 Oktyabr' in Odesskaya Oblast, the Krasnaya Volna Sovkhoz in Khar'kovskaya Oblast, and many others, which were among the first in the Ukraine to convert fully to correct crop rotation.

In 1950, the area sown to perennial grasses in sovkhozes was twice as great as during the prewar years. In 1952, despite considerable plowing up of perennial grass areas for winter wheat, the proportion of the sown area devoted to perennial grasses reached 17 percent.

Together with higher grain crop yields, sovkhozes of the Ukraine obtained in recent years sharply increased yields of fodder crops, such as grasses, ensilage crops, and fodder root crops. In the Sovkhoz imeni Dekabristov in Poltavskaya Oblast, the average yield of fodder root crops rose to 800 quintals per hectare from the entire area sown; in the Novyy Aydar Sovkhoz in Voroshilovgradskaya Oblast, the average yield of fodder root crops was 500 quintals per hectare and that of pumpkins was 300 quintals per hectare. In the Staryy Kavray Sovkhoz, a yield of 34.5 quintals of hay was obtained per hectare of perennial grasses sown, and 12 metric tons of succulent fodder were procured per cow. In the Uchebnyy Sovkhoz in Voroshilovgradskaya Oblast, the squad (zveno) of O. P. Aldakimova obtained consistently high yields of fodder root crops: 1,200 quintals per hectare in 1950, 1,260 in 1951, and 1,320 in 1952. In 1952, this squad harvested from an area of 5 hectares 6,600 quintals of fodder root crops and 950 quintals of ensilage prepared from their tops, i.e., about 800 metric tons of succulent fodder. Carrying out the party and government decision concerning the creation of a stable fodder base for the growing number of head of livestock, all Ukrainian sovkhozes began to introduce fodder crop rotation systems, and by 1952 such rotation systems had been introduced in half of the sovkhozes. As a result, it was possible to convert to the more progressive method of keeping livestock in barns or pens during the summer.

In Ukrainian sovkhozes, the accomplishments of Michurin agrobiological science and the experiences of leading agricultural enterprises found wide application in production practice. In 1951 and 1952, one third of all sown crops were sown by the closerow and crisscross methods and all corn was planted by the checkrow method; hundreds of thousands of hectares of winter grain crops received supplemental fertilization, since the use of airplanes for this purpose made it possible to carry out this measure quickly and extensively. Widely introduced in sovkhozes were the practices of plowing summer fallow, sowing perennial grasses during the summer, and planting potatoes during the summer. Shallow plowing of stubble, artificial pollination, and sowing of spring crops exclusively on fall-plowed winter fallow became standard sovkhoz practices.

Up to World War II, Ukrainian sovkhozes were specialized enterprises since the extensive grain sovkhozes in the steppe regions had been created on the "grain factory" principle. But one-sided development of sovkhozes led to incorrect labor utilization and to financial difficulties. The reports and speeches made at the 19th Party Congress pointed out that an increase in sovkhoz output for the market and reduction in production costs must proceed on the basis of diversification in sovkhoz production. Now, there are four or five livestock farms in every Ukrainian sovkhoz, irrespective of its primary production specialty. Hog and poultry raising are developing rapidly. During the postwar years, the number of livestock in sovkhozes per 100 hectares of land increased considerably, as shown in the following table:

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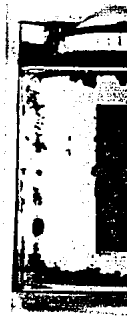

Production Specialty	Cattle		Hogs	
	1940 - 1941	1951 - 1952	1940 - 1941	1951 - 1952
Grain	6.5	8.5	0.9	10.0
Milk	22.2	24.0	2.4	10.0
Hogs	8.0	10.9	71.0	75.0

In grain sovkhozes, for example, the number of hogs increased tenfold and that of sheep twofold, as compared with the prewar number.

By fulfilling the Three-Year (1949-1951) Livestock Development Plan, Ukrainian sovkhozes achieved new successes. During the period, the number of head of cattle increased 78.7 percent, hogs 104.9 percent, sheep 132.3 percent, and fowl 122.2 percent. Livestock productivity increased considerably. During the 3 years, the number of cows in sovkhozes almost doubled, while the average annual milk yield per cow increased 533 kilograms and exceeded the prewar level by 424 kilograms. Average annual milk yields in many enterprises (for example, the Sovkhoz imeni Stalin in Kiyevskaya Oblast, the Rykhal'skiy Sovkhoz in Zhitomirskaya Oblast, the Bol'shevik Sovkhoz in Zaporozhskaya Oblast, and others) rose to 4,000-4,500 kilograms per cow.

In 1951, sovkhozes delivered to the state 1.5 times as much commercial pork per sow as in 1940. Deliveries of milk and other animal products were also greater. With each passing year, deliveries of commercial products per 100 hectares of land became greater, a fact which points up the increasingly intensive nature of sovkhoz production. In 1952, while maintaining the attained level of output for the market, sovkhozes improved the quality of products delivered to the state; for example, there was a considerable increase in the number of fattened and semifattened hogs and cattle delivered.

During the postwar years, a characteristic feature in the development of Ukrainian sovkhozes was that they made a transition from having individual high producers to obtaining large harvests on extensive areas and achieving high livestock productivity throughout an entire heard.

Sovkhoz workers seek and find new ways of raising crop yields and livestock productivity. Among sovkhoz agronomists who blazed new trails in agricultural practice are the following: B. P. Taran, who is widely known in the Ukraine and who initiated the checkrow method of planting maize in the Sovkhoz imeni Komintern; F. I. Solovey, who initiated shallow plowing of stubble simultaneously with combining by connecting the two machines in series in the Rugskiy Sovkhoz in Nikolayevskaya Oblast; and Ye. A. Vinchenko, agronomist at the Donets Agricultural Tekhnikum, who developed the "green conveyer" (successive grazing of grass fields) scheme for conditions prevailing in the steppe. Their methods were passed on to all sovkhozes and kolkhozes in the Ukraine.

In sovkhozes, much attention is paid to production experience. For example, the problem of rates of sowing spring wheat seed was solved on the basis of mass-experience data. In the Ukrainian steppe, spring wheat does not bush to any great extent and a sparse stand produces a poor harvest; but by increasing the seeding rate of spring wheat, sovkhozes succeeded in growing better harvests of this crop.

A technique used in the Yelenovskiy Sovkhoz is noteworthy. There, sunflowers intended for ensilage are sown in the fall; in spring, the sprouting plants are harrowed and at the same time Sudan grass is sown among them. This sowing method permits earlier harvesting of the sunflowers for ensilage and, after they have been removed, makes it possible to get in addition one or two cuttings of Sudan grass for hay or green fodder.

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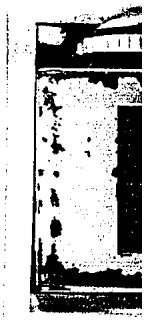

In the Ukrainian portion of the Poles'ye Lowland, there are sovkhozes which have achieved high levels of production. The Sovkhozes imeni Chkalov and imeni Kirov and the hog-breeding Sovkhoz imeni 10 Let Oktyabr'ya, all in Chernigovskaya Oblast, obtain winter wheat yields of 17-24 quintals per hectare from the entire areas sown. The last-named sovkhoz has obtained a barley yield of 25 quintals per hectare and an annual milk yield per cow of over 3,800 kilograms. Despite the fact that the Sovkhozes imeni Chkalov and imeni Kirov are seed-growing enterprises, they annually deliver to the state no fewer than 20 fattened hogs per 100 hectares of plowland.

The experience of leading sovkhozes in the Poles'ye Lowland emphasizes the fact that increased profitability of these enterprises is directly related to the following factors: introduction of the grass-field crop rotation system; introduction of lupine for fodder and soil-enrichment purposes; application of organic fertilizers, especially manure, on a wide scale; and a proper combination of branches of production.

The direct relationship between the quantity of manure applied to the soil or extent of lupine sown and increased crop and milk yields is illustrated by the following table (data given in percent of 1948):

Komsomolets Poles'ya Sovkhoz			Sovkhoz imeni 10 Let Oktyabr'ya		
	1949	1950		1949	1950
Manure applied	115	119	Area sown to lupine	273	342
Grain crop yield per hectare	139	151	Perennial grass hay yield per hectare	159	182
Average milk yield per cow	128	134	Average milk yield per cow	122	139

In a sovkhoz-type enterprise, its capacity to produce for the market is particularly important. Stalin said: "Bear in mind that sovkhozes are economic enterprises which produce largely for the market. We have sovkhozes which deliver not less than 60 percent of their products for market." The party and state have repeatedly emphasized the need for all-around improvement in sovkhoz capacity to produce all types of products for market.

A comparison of data on sovkhoz operations in the Ukraine in 1945 and 1950, as shown in the following table, illustrates this improvement in the capacity to produce for market:

Type of Production	Rise in Capacity to Produce for Market (1950 in percent of 1945)
Grain crops	102
Milk	123
Meat	148
Including pork	194

In 1951 and 1952, sovkhozes delivered to the state, per 100 hectares of plowland, about 10 more quintals of meat and 25 more quintals of milk than in the prewar period. They achieved the capacity to produce for market 70 percent of all grain and milk produced; for leading sovkhozes, this figure was as high as 73-75 percent. In the last 3 years, sovkhozes delivered to the state, per permanent worker, 15-20 percent more grain for the market than in the prewar

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years. This means that additional machinery, diversified development of the enterprises, and growth of the leading-producer movement led to considerably higher labor productivity. Higher labor productivity is indicated by an increase in the gross field crop production per permanent worker; this increase, despite a rise in the relative number of permanent workers, was about 10 percent annually in the last 3 years (1950-1952).

Of great importance for strengthening the sovkhoz production economy is proper supervision of sovkhoz farms and branches. Farms and branches are the units into which sovkhozes are subdivided, which carry out fulfillment of state plans, and where 75-80 percent of all wage funds, fuel supplies, fodder, and materials and expended.

Cost accounting is one method of supervising the operations of branches. Internal accounting is accomplished in all sovkhozes by establishing planned tasks and quarterly goals for branches and farms. In recent years, however, another method of accounting has found wide application; this method was proposed by the Peremozhets Sovkhoz, the largest sovkhoz in the Ukraine. In this sovkhoz, branches and farms were converted to the independent balance. After this conversion, operations there were evaluated in the light of the entire body of measures aimed at a reduction in production costs. The operations and expenditures of branches and farms were no longer obscured by over-all data for the entire sovkhoz. As a result, a campaign was undertaken in each branch and farm for elimination of unnecessary expenditures and for discovery of additional sources of income from the various lines of production. The experience of the Peremozhets Sovkhoz deserves serious study and dissemination.

In the postwar period, considerable reconstruction and modernization work was carried out in sovkhozes. Construction work was in accordance with general plans for establishment of sovkhoz headquarters centers. During the last 3 years, more than 1,000 dwelling units were built, while more than 15,000 sovkhoz workers and employees built individual homes.

All sovkhoz central headquarters are electrified, and electric power is available to more than half of the branch and farm headquarters. Seventy percent of sovkhozes have radio communications, and 84 percent have telephone communications. There are in sovkhozes about 600 ponds, 300 reservoirs, and more than 2,500 dug and drilled wells.

By striving for reduced production costs, Ukrainian sovkhozes achieved considerable success in profitable operations. The cost of producing grain was cut 27 percent in the last 3 years. The number of highly profitable sovkhozes increased year by year: in 1951, more than half of the Ukrainian sovkhozes finished the year with sizable profits; for example, the Peremozhets Sovkhoz had 2 million rubles of profits and the Sovkhoz No 626 in Dnepropetrovskaya Oblast had 1,174,000 rubles of profits. In 1952, the number of such sovkhozes again increased.

However, sovkhozes also have serious deficiencies. It was pointed out at the 19th Party Congress that the high cost of producing grain and other products is one of the greatest shortcomings in the operation of sovkhozes. There are enormous reserves for cost reduction in sovkhozes. While the cost of producing one quintal of grain was cut 25-30 percent in most Ukrainian sovkhozes, this cost was only half as great in 1952 as in 1950 in the Sovkhoz imeni Kaganovich in Nikolayevskaya Oblast. Leading sovkhozes have become models of profitable agricultural enterprises, and conversion of all sovkhozes to profitable operation is a task of the first order.

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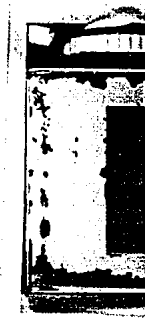

Another basic shortcoming is instability in yields obtained for a number of crops, particularly row crops. While leading enterprises consistently obtain big harvests of all crops on large areas, many sovkhozes concentrate on certain crops and neglect others. Fodder crops belong to the neglected class, with the result that yields of these crops do not meet livestock requirements.

An inadequate fodder base is not the only reason for a lag in raising livestock productivity in some sovkhozes. The rates of increasing productive livestock and improving herd composition vary greatly even in sovkhozes engaged in the same line of production and located in the same natural economic zone. Thus, in leading sovkhozes, cows constitute 40-45 percent of all cattle and in sovkhozes located near industrial centers even 50-55 percent of the herd; on the other hand, many sovkhozes are unable even to replace older cows with young animals because of the small number of cows in the herd. A slow rate of increase in the number of cows delays increased production for the market.

The development of animal husbandry in grain sovkhozes is supposed to be a guarantee against unprofitable operation of such enterprises regardless of conditions in any given year. But in some grain sovkhozes, animal husbandry operations have resulted in losses because not enough attention was devoted to them. Similar results have been observed in some sovkhozes with regard to side activities such as poultry husbandry, apiculture, and truck farming. Since they are not sources of additional monetary accumulations, these activities are not filling the role planned for them by the party and state, namely, to further the all-around development of sovkhozes. These shortcomings must be eliminated in the very near future.

In the Fifth Five-Year Plan period, the yield of not only grain crops but also grasses, fodder root crops, and ensilage crops is to rise sharply so as to make possible increased production of livestock fodder, particularly succulent, milk-producing fodder.

By the end of the Fifth Five-Year Plan period, the following results are to have been achieved in Ukrainian sovkhozes: an increase in the number of head of livestock, especially fine-wooled and semifine-wooled sheep; an increase in the proportion of cows to all cattle; a milk yield of 3,000 liters annually per cow for the entire herd; an 85-percent increase in the wool clip as compared with 1950; with an increase in livestock numbers and higher productivity, greater deliveries to the state of milk, meat, wool, and other products; an increase in the capacity to produce for the market so that 80-85 percent of all production will be for market; a reduction in crop and animal husbandry production costs; with greater capacity to produce for market and lower production costs, a rise in profits; and with economic strengthening of the sovkhozes and increased labor productivity, a rise in the material and cultural well-being of sovkhoz workers and specialists.

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